

Arlington's 200th Celebration Letterbox

This historical letterbox was created by a group of 6 Junior Girl Scouts from Troop 7332 as part of their Bronze Award Project. The letterbox is being placed in conjunction with the 200th Anniversary Celebration of Arlington's incorporation as a separate town. In searching for this letterbox, you will stop at many historically significant areas in the center of our town (but not all, by any means!). You may notice the names West Cambridge and Menotomy - both were prior names for Arlington. Menotomy was the name of this area of Cambridge during the Revolutionary War. Both Paul Revere and William Dawes rode through Menotomy sounding the alarm that the British Regulars were approaching. The town was incorporated as West Cambridge in 1807 - a new and separate town. The name changed to Arlington in 1867.

A FEW NOTES ABOUT LETTERBOXING:

1. Letterboxing is a combination of hiking, navigating, exploring, treasure hunting and stamp artistry. Follow the Clues to find a "hidden" box that contains a stamp (usually hand carved), a logbook and a stamp pad. You carry with you your own personal stamp and logbook. When you find the letterbox, make an ink impression of your personal stamp in the letterbox logbook and make an impression of the letterbox stamp in your personal logbook. Then replace the letterbox stamp & logbook and return the letterbox to its "hiding spot." The letterbox logbook will contain a record of all those who have found it. Your personal logbook will contain a record of all letterboxes you have found.

See www.letterboxing.org or www.atlasquest.com for more about letterboxing.

2. Bring: Your personal stamp and personal logbook, pen, compass, water bottle and a snack (this hunt can take anywhere from 1.5 - 2.5 hours).

3. Use common sense when walking this tour. Stay to the right on the bike path, cross at crosswalks and on walk signals, pay attention to traffic, stay on sidewalks, etc. It is the responsibility of the letterbox hunter to act safely while doing this hunt. All paths are public walkways meant for pedestrian traffic.

Waiver of Responsibility and Disclaimer:

Letterboxing, like any outdoor sport, carries the risk of unforeseen hazards. As conditions may vary, it is the responsibility of the letterbox searcher to become

thoroughly familiar with the conditions in the area of the letterbox search, to adequately prepare for those conditions, and to conduct oneself safely and responsibly with respect to those conditions and with respect to his or her personal abilities and limitations. No one associated with this letterbox assumes any liability for events which may occur, related directly or indirectly to one's searching for the letterbox. **DO NOT LET CHILDREN HUNT FOR THE LETTERBOX UNSUPERVISED.** By reading and utilizing the letterbox clues herein, you acknowledge the above conditions, and accept responsibility for your own actions, and agree to hold non-liable the clue writers and others associated with this hunt, and further, you agree to provide this disclaimer to any person with whom you share these letterbox clues.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: The letterbox is located inside one of the historical buildings. **Therefore, you must plan to retrieve the box between 12:00pm - 4:00pm, Tuesday - Sunday (not Monday).** The building is free and open to the public. Please allow approximately 2 hours to complete the search. Also, when on the bike path PLEASE remember to stay TO THE RIGHT for your own personal safety and so as not to disrupt the bike and foot traffic.

For *Girl Scout Troops* -- participating in this letterbox search can satisfy requirements for the following badges (not an exhaustive list):

Brownie Try-Its: Listening to the Past; Outdoor Adventurer.

Junior Badges: Finding Your Way; Hiker; Local Lore; Your Outdoor Surroundings.

DIRECTIONS: There is free parking in the parking lot at the end of Pond Street (the clues *START* at this parking lot).

From Route 2: Exit onto Route 60 (Pleasant Street) toward Arlington Center.

Continue down Pleasant Street until you reach Massachusetts Avenue. Take a right at the light. Continue down Mass. Ave. through another set of lights. Soon after the lights, turn right onto Pond Street. Go down Pond Street and under the bridge. Park in any open spot.

(There is also a metered municipal lot with much more parking. As you come down Pleasant Street, cross Mass. Ave at the light onto Mystic St. and then turn right into the municipal parking lot. To get to the start of the letterbox clues, walk to the intersection of Mystic St. and Mass. Ave and follow the directions at the end of the clues where it says "To Get Back To Your Car.")

CLUES:

1. From the parking lot at the end of Pond Street, head SOUTH toward a path with a playground on the left and the large pond on the right.

** 50,000 years ago I was not a pond; I was a bunch of glaciers. After about 40,000 years, the glaciers started to melt and fill the holes they made. Today I am a pond. On April 19, 1775, Mother Batherick, an old woman who liked to collect dandelions along my shore, accepted the surrender of six fleeing British soldiers whose supply wagon had been ambushed by some of Arlington's men who were too old to fight in the regular militia. She delivered the men to a minute man captain and told them, "If you ever live to get back, you tell King George that an old woman took six of his grenadier's prisoners." The story made it back to England causing one English paper to print, "If one old Yankee woman can take six grenadiers, how many soldiers will it require to conquer America?" In the 1840's, I became the center of a major ice harvesting business in Arlington. Ice blocks were cut out of me and sent to far away places like Africa and India. I supplied local people with ice blocks for refrigeration as well as fresh water. Today I am a recreational area of the town with a boat ramp, picnic tables and parks.
What am I?

To find out, walk along the path and look at the pond on your right. This is **Spy Pond**. Continue on the path as you pass picnic tables (sit and have a snack if you brought one) and take in the beauty of Spy Pond. When you reach the road, turn to your left (EAST) and go to the paved biking/walking/jogging path. Head NORTH down the path for a very short distance and walk over to the Spy Pond Information Board on your left to learn more about Spy Pond and its place in Arlington's history.

2. After reading about Spy Pond, turn around so you are facing the bike path again.

** I am a place where people can exercise for over 10.5 miles. I follow the path of an old railroad line. Train tracks were laid from North Cambridge to Lexington in 1846 and later extended to Bedford in 1874. In 1974 the idea of making the rail line into a recreational trail was proposed. The trail was built between 1991 and 1993 and now ranks as the country's second busiest. The Arlington section of the trail was dedicated to Donald Marquis, who served as Arlington's Town Manager for 34 years.
What am I?

You are looking at the **Minuteman Bikeway** - the 500th rail-trail in the United States.

3. Now get ready to head to our next historic location.

** I am a place where William and Sarah (Robbins) Butterfield have a family plot and where Jason Russell now lies with 11 fellow patriots. Both British and Colonial soldiers from the April 19, 1775 battles are buried here. In 1829 next to me a set of hay scales was erected for the use of the town.
What am I?

To find out, get back on the Minuteman Bikeway and head NORTH down it until you come to a road called "Swan Place." Cross Swan Place at the crosswalk and follow the red brick path until you are heading NORTHWEST along Mass. Ave (toward Arlington Center). Continue until you get to the intersection of Mass. Ave. and Pleasant St. Cross Pleasant St. (when you have the walk signal!) and turn left heading SOUTHWEST along Pleasant St. until you come to the entrance to the **Old Burying Ground**. Enter the Old Burying Ground and look at the many historical head stones. While you are here, look for the grave of Jason Russell who is mentioned on the sign at the entrance (you will hear more about him later). See if you can find the grave of Rebecah Hill, her headstone has a tree that has grown around it. Look for the Walter Fletcher family tomb (you will hear about him later). Look for the monument to 9 soldiers from Menotomy who were killed while battling British Regulars on the first day of the Revolutionary War, April 19, 1775.

Once you have spent some time here, head back to the path through the center of the Burying Ground.

4. ** I'm a house built around 1800. My owner manufactured an object that was used to use to straighten cotton and wool fibers before they were spun to yarn. In 1847, Nathan Robbins bought the house. Nathan, a widower, was joined in the house by four children of his late son. The Robbins family, especially two of Nathan's granddaughters, donated much to Arlington (including the Town Hall and Memorial Gardens). In 1890 the house was rotated 90 degrees and moved back to make room for the library. In 1931, the Robbins Sisters gave their house to the town.
What am I?

To find out, head NORTHWEST on the path until you reach the other entrance to the Burying Ground. Look at the large yellow house that is almost directly in front of you - this is the **Whittemore-Robbins House**.

Be careful crossing the parking lot and go to the front entrance of the house. Note the welcoming pineapple finials atop the iron railing posts. The Whittemore-Robbins House is now principally used as a function facility and for town offices, including the Arlington Historical Commission.

5. Face the front entrance of the house. Now turn to your right and follow the red brick walkway. Continue to follow it as it curves around to the right (Note - look left as the path curves right and you will see a playground a short distance away -- take a break and play there if you would like!). Cross the parking lot to reach the red brick walkway on the other side (NORTH-NORTHWEST) and get ready for your next stop.

** I was sculpted by the Arlington artist Cyrus E. Dallin in 1911. I am Arlington's most famous Dallin statue. I was commissioned by the Robbins family to honor Winfield Robbins. I was put in the Robbins Memorial Gardens in 1913. The Native American word "menotomy" means "swift running water," so I was installed at the top of a waterfall. I show a Native American man who has just been goose hunting and has stopped to take a drink from the waterfall. What am I?

To find out, continue on the brick path. Go left at the fork until you arrive at the reflecting pool on your left. Stop and read about the Memorial Garden. Then go up either side of the reflecting pool to Cyrus E. Dallin's **Menotomy Indian Hunter** statue.

6. After you have admired the statue, follow the red brick pathway back along the side of the reflecting pool to head to our next stop.

** I am a memorial sculpted by Cyrus E. Dallin. I have been here since I was dedicated in 1913. On me sit a minister, a pilgrim mother, Squaw Sachem, and a minuteman. Around them are eagles and under them are turtles. At the very top of me is the Spirit of Massachusetts – who holds a cash crop, can you guess which one? I was sculpted to celebrate the newly finished modern town hall. What am I?

To find out, continue down the path along side the reflecting pool. At the end, turn left to continue following the red brick walkway. At the fork, go right, follow around and continue to the next fork. Take the left fork then turn left to continue on the brick walk. Continue on the path until you are in front of the Town Hall. You should now see the **Robbins Memorial Flagstaff** – The allegory "Spirit of

Massachusetts" on top with tobacco leaves in her hand. Continue on the brick path to the flagpole.

7. ** My husband was killed by another tribe and at that time my sons were too young to rule. I took control and ruled for 30 years. The tribe that killed my husband drove me inland. Many of my people died from sicknesses. After that, the English came to us offering protection and friendship, and they wanted to own my land - but peacefully. I started selling my land to share with the English and in May 1640 sold some to Cambridge and my payment was a new coat every winter along with other things. I wrote a deed that would be put into order after my death and it said that all the land west of the Mystic lakes was Jotham Gibbson's to acknowledge the English's kindness to me. Who am I?

Look for the figure that is facing NORTHEAST. **This is Squaw Sachem.**

8. Ready for the next stop?

** The oldest part of me, consisting of two rooms, was built in 1740 by Jason Russell. Later he added two more rooms. Decorative changes around the windows and front door and an ell (a wing built at a right angle to the main building) were added in the 19th Century. I was the site of the bloodiest fight of April 19, 1775. The battle came after the British retreated from Lexington and Concord. Twelve colonists were killed. My owner was one of those killed. He was buried in the Old Burying Ground. From the inscription on his headstone in the nearby Old Burying Ground: "Jason Russell was barbarously murdered in his own house by Gage's bloody Troops on the 19th of April 1775. Age 59 His body is quietly resting in this grave with eleven of our friends who in like manner with many others were cruelly slain on that fateful day. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." An annual reenactment of this battle occurs at this site. What am I?

To find out, follow the red brick path NORTH and out to Mass. Ave. Turn left and follow the sidewalk along Mass. Ave going WEST. Cross Academy St. at the crosswalk and continue WEST to the next corner. Cross Jason St. Turn left and walk along Jason St. SOUTHWEST along and ivy covered rock wall to get to the entrance to the **Jason Russell House** and to read a sign that tells a little about it. (Also the site of the Arlington Historical Society Museum).

NOTE: If you would like to tour the house, the hours are: Sat. & Sun. 1:00pm - 4:00pm April - October or by appointment. The fee is: \$3.00 - Adult, \$1.00 - Child.

9. When you are finished at the Jason Russell House, walk back along Jason St. to the intersection of Jason St. and Mass. Ave.

** I am the first free public library in Massachusetts. I am the oldest continuously running free children's library in the United States. I was once located on the corner of Mass. Ave. and Cleveland St. and have had 6 locations! I was named in the memory of Eli Robbins. Through a monetary gift by his wife, Maria C. Robbins, I got my new name, new building and permanent home. I am now the main library in Arlington and I am listed on the National Register of Historic Places. What am I?

To find out, cross Jason St. and head down the sidewalk along Mass. Ave. going EAST. Cross back over Academy St. and continue until you reach "Library Way." The **Robbins Library** is on your right. Note the formal front entrance, which was modeled after the Cancelleria Palace in Rome.

10. ** Who is a man who represents the U.S. and is always wearing a top hat in pictures?
I was actually a man named Samuel Wilson. I was born in Arlington in 1766. My father and brothers fought at the Battle of Lexington on April 19, 1775. I was too young to fight, but it has been said that even at that young age, I helped a group of Arlington men capture a British supply wagon train that day. My brother Ebenezer and I eventually moved to Troy, New York where we opened a meat packing business. The meat was stamped "U.S." meaning United States, but it took on another meaning and I became a national symbol. I died in 1854. I was important because I helped to free my country and unify the people. During my lifetime I put into practice the ideas of freedom and brotherhood that would help to build the United States and make it prosper. There is a monument erected in my honor. Who am I?

To find this monument, cross over Library Way and continue to the intersection of Mass. Ave. and Pleasant St.

PLEASE NOTE: Pleasant St. changes names to Mystic Street once you cross Mass. Ave. So, as you look at this intersection, Pleasant St. is to the right of Mass. Ave. and Mystic St. is to the left.
Turn left to cross Mass. Ave. at the intersection when you have the walk signal. Continue straight down the sidewalk (along Mystic St.) until you see the **Uncle Sam Memorial** on your left.

Samuel Wilson was well-liked by his employees at the meat packing plant in Troy, and they affectionately referred to him as "Uncle Sam." During the War of 1812,

Sam Wilson was the meat inspector for the state of New York. When meat supplied to U.S. troops was stamped "U.S." (meaning United States) the employees started saying the meat was being sent to the troops by their "Uncle Sam." Soon the soldiers also started referring to the stamp as coming from "Uncle Sam" and he became a symbol of our nation. This monument was erected in 1976 to commemorate the birthplace of Samuel Wilson, "Uncle Sam."

11. ** In 1825 the town bought its first fire engine. It was named Friendship No.1 and consisted of an oval tub on wheels. In 1832 the town bought another fire engine because Friendship No.1 was destroyed in a fire. The second fire engine was named Good Intent. Good Intent was a four-wheeled machine similar to the shape of a box. In 1855 the town passed an act to establish a fire department, prior to this, every able-bodied citizen was on duty to fight fires. Enterprise 4 was a suction engine built and first used in Massachusetts. This engine was located in a new firehouse on the land of Walter Fletcher on Massachusetts Avenue, almost directly in front of the Cutter Schoolhouse. One of three operating in town, I am the first in the U.S. built octagonal in shape (to allow trucks to emerge simultaneously in all directions). I was built in the mid to late 1920's and am unique as I am still in operation in 2007. What am I?

To find this structure, go back to the intersection of Mystic St. and Mass. Ave. Cross Mystic St. at the crosswalk. Go straight on the sidewalk along Mass. Ave. You will pass many restaurants, ice cream shops, coffee shops and stores -- so take a break if you would like! As you cross Medford St. look to your left. You will see the marquis for the *Regent Theatre*. The Regent opened in 1916 as a vaudeville theatre and playhouse. There were bowling alleys in the basement. It was turned into a movie house in the 1920s complete with piano for the silent films of the time. It continues operation to this day providing both live shows and movies. When you reach the other side of Medford St. continue along the right side of the brick "courtyard" (walking along the Mass. Ave. side, not along the store fronts - you will pass by a few raised plantings and sitting areas). Continue to where a parking lot exits out onto Mass. Ave. Cross the parking lot here (at the crosswalk) and continue straight on the sidewalk along Mass. Ave. On your left, you will pass the *Arlington Soldier Civil War Memorial* dedicated in 1887. You will then come to a Reflection Circle on your left before a memorial to Arlington citizens who served in the United States Armed Forces in all wars. Feel free to rest and reflect on their, and all military members', service to our country. Next you will see a large memorial with the names of Arlington-born soldiers of all U.S. conflicts. This is the "*Arlington Veterans Honor Roll Monument*." Look for the memorial to the women of Menotomy "who so loyally helped in the cause of independence" during the Revolutionary War. See if you can find a stash of canon balls.

Then, before you will be the **Arlington Center Fire Station**, one of the few remaining eight-sided firehouses still in operation.

12. ** I was built in the early 1800's about two miles away from where I am now. I was moved to Mass. Ave. in 1984 and restored as the Cyrus E. Dallin Art Museum. Cyrus E. Dallin was born in 1861 and died in 1944. For almost his whole career, he lived in Arlington. He sculpted the Paul Revere statue that is outside the Old North Church in Boston. He also sculpted the original Angel Moroni statue for the top of the Mormon Cathedral in Salt Lake City. He mostly, however, made statues of Native Americans like the Indian Hunter you saw on this tour. Probably his most famous statue, the Appeal to the Great Spirit, is outside the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. I contain many originals and reproductions of his works. What am I?

To find this building, retrace your steps back to the intersection of Mass. Ave. and Mystic Street. Just before you reach the intersection, look at the White House on your right. This is the **Jefferson Cutter House**. It is now the home to the Cyrus E. Dallin Museum (and this Letterbox!) Note the memorial to Samuel Whittemore who, at the age of 80, killed 3 British Regulars before being beaten, bayoneted and left for dead -- but he lived for another 18 years! Note also the section of the old railroad in the front yard. Look down both directions of the railroad section to see how the bike trail follows the old railroad bed.

13. To retrieve the Letterbox, go through the front door of the museum and go straight back to the table near the back door. The table has many pamphlets and pieces of literature on it. You will see a small wooden box shaped like a book. Congratulations! You have found our **Arlington's 200th Celebration Letterbox!** Stamp this hand carved stamp in your logbook and don't forget to stamp your personal stamp in our logbook! **Please be careful with the stamp and logbook and replace the letterbox carefully on the table.** Feel free to look around the Dallin Museum to see some of Cyrus E. Dallin's work including replicas of Appeal to the Great Spirit and Angel Moroni as well as other works from this wonderful local artist. *The museum is free and open to the public.*

We hope you had fun walking through Arlington Center and learning a bit of its history. If you would like a longer local history tour, an Eagle Scout in town has put together a Menotomy Historical Tour, which you can find at www.menotomytrail.com/id1.htm.

To Get Back To Your Car:

After you leave the Dallin Museum, go to the intersection of Mass. Ave. and Mystic Street. Cross Mass. Ave. and turn left to walk SOUTHEAST down the sidewalk along Mass. Ave for almost the block (pass the bank and the driveway for the bakery). Follow the red brick path around to the right and cross Swan Place at the crosswalk to enter the bike path. Walk down the path (SOUTH) until you come to a set of stairs on your right (just after you cross over Pond Street) - descend the stairs back to the park by Spy Pond. Turn right on the path and head back to the parking lot and your car. (**If you miss the stairs, you will continue on the path (SOUTH) until you pass the Spy Pond information board on your right and come to a street. Turn right along the sidewalk and then right again onto the path that leads you by the picnic tables on your left to the playground on your right. The parking lot is ahead of you.)